

TOWN OF LA JARA

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Regular Meeting
Date: July 13, 2023

A permanent set of these minutes are maintained in the Town Clerk's Office. Approved Minutes are also available on the web at www.townoflajara.colorado.gov

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Medina at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Medina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present were Trustees: Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina. Trustee Chavez attended virtually.

Absent: None

Also present were Town Manager Zaragoza, Town Clerk Pagnotta, Police Chief Lujan, Public Works Supervisor Dufresne, Building Inspector Rodriguez, and Town Attorney Walker.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Consent Calendar

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to approve the consent calendar; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Guests

Nathan Harrison a Location Manager for a filming crew addressed the board stating they have been filming a movie around the San Luis Valley and requested permission to use La Jara as a site for a couple of scenes. He stated one site will be at the elementary school and another near the bank. Harrison stated he will work with the police department and the maintenance personnel to coordinate street closures, traffic control and removal of any signage that may be needed.

Sarah Stober with the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group and Council of Governments requested a meeting to be able to talk in detail about what her organizations are involved with. She explained that Town Manager Zaragoza is the chairperson for the San Luis Valley Development

Resources Group and mentioned a few of the projects that they are working on. She also mentioned the Development Resources side of the organization is an economic development organization for the region. This organization has applied for federal funding through the state, allocated through EDA and through the Department of Commerce for a planning grant and explained the various projects they have been working on through the eye of Zaragoza as the chairperson. She also mentioned that COG allocated \$10,000 in matching funds to help support a regional housing project to get more federal funding into the area with more of an impact. She thanked the town for their support and membership to these organizations and thanked them for allowing Town Manager Zaragoza to donate his time to serve as the chairperson. She asked the board to consider allowing her some more time later to discuss in detail these projects and her organizations' involvement in detail.

Citizen Comments

Lois Trenholm from the La Jara Rotary Club requested a donation for the 4-H Livestock sale again this year.

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to donate \$200 to La Jara Rotary Club for the 4-H Livestock sale; seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Tom Rendon addressed the board regarding a complaint that he had about Town Clerk Pagnotta not assisting him in filling out his check for a water payment. He felt discriminated against because he is a disabled vet with Parkinson's Disease and is unable to write clearly. Mayor Medina thanked him for his service and stated that there may be some liability for the clerk and town when assisting in filling out a check but would look into the issue.

New Business

2022 Audit Presentation from WSB – Jack Holman from Wall, Smith and Bateman presented the 2022 Audited Financial Statement to the board.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the 2022 Audited Financial Statement; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

November ballot question to publish by title only - Attorney Walker explained that the town does not have an ordinance in place to allow for publication of ordinances by title only. He explained the pros and cons of allowing publication by title only. He further explained that if the town desired to publish future ordinances by title only it would require a vote of the citizens. Attorney Walker asked if the board wanted to coordinate with the county to put this issue on the November ballot and further asked if there were other issues that might also be included in the November ballot. He explained the deadlines that are involved and the possible fees. It was decided that because there isn't an urgent need at this point to wait and put the issue on the regular town election ballot in April.

4-Day work week proposal – Town Manager Zaragoza presented a handout that gave some pros and cons of implementing a 4-Day work week. He stated the maintenance department and administration staff would like to consider working 4 days a week, 10 hours per day. He mentioned that the police department would continue with their regular working schedule. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez asked if maintenance personnel would be on call during the off time and Town Manager Zaragoza replied that they would

rotate taking calls. Trustee Wilson felt that the proposal needs to be well thought out including feedback from citizens so that trust and transparency is being considered. A work session was considered to be able to discuss in more detail.

Old Business

Housing Proposal – Karen Hinojos from Conejos County Housing Authority would like to partner with the town to help address the housing shortage and would like the town to consider leasing, gifting, or selling the land to the Housing Authority. There was discussion on the types of housing that she is proposing. Hinojos explained that the housing would not be subsidized but rather would be workforce homes. She gave some examples of workforce wages and how they correlate to affordability for homeownership. Mayor Medina asked how the Housing Authority and Lois Lukondi, a developer, would work together. After some discussion there were a lot of questions as to who would be responsible for the different aspects of the development, such as who would be responsible for infrastructure, roads and etc. It was suggested to have a work session so that the details could be discussed in detail. Sarah Stober commented that her organization could help with a feasibility study and funding options. A work session was scheduled for July 27 at 6 pm at the senior center.

Kurtis Shawcroft – Master Plan, DOLA funding - Kurtis Shawcroft joined the meeting virtually requesting approval for the submission of a DOLA Grant application to develop a Master Plan for the water system. He and Town Manager Zaragoza have met with Randi Snead from DOLA regarding the project. There will be a 25% cash match for the grant that will cost the Town about \$20,000. The application is due in August.

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to approve and submit the DOLA grant application for a Master Plan for the water system; seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Town Manager's employment agreement – Town Manager Zaragoza requested that his employment agreement be revised to state that he will work 40 hours per week instead of the previously requested 32 hour work week. Mayor Medina stated that he was not given a raise with the other employees at the first of the year and suggested giving him a 3.5% cost of living pay increase. It was also noted that Zaragoza has health insurance from his previous employer through PERA; therefore, the town would not be covering his health insurance.

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to revise Town Manager Zaragoza employment agreement to state he would work a 40-hour work week, the town will not be providing his health insurance and he will be given a 3.5% cost of living pay increase retroactive to April 1, 2023; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Reports

Town Manager Report

Town Manager Zaragoza submitted a written report highlighting the following:

- There will be no Care & Share Mobil Market in July, but will resume on August 17th (11 am to Noon) and on September 21st. Northerner's Senior Center will do a food distribution on August 11th starting at 9 am.
- Glory Days Celebration date (July 15th). Volunteers still needed the day of the event.

- July 13th meeting with Zach Weiderspoon, and others to discuss water situation when power outages occur, and backup generator fails to kick on.
- Should Brownfields representatives be contacted to begin the process of securing planning support, technical assistance, and as assessment of the abandoned building on Main Street?
- Mosquito spraying started the second week of June and coverages includes Richfield area. Most of the residents in Richfield have contributed a small fee to help defray cost of the solution and fuel.
- Some major pothole repairs have been completed in town. Will fill some of the smaller ones at a later date.
- Paving of Myron Way from 4th Street. County Road and Bridge will assist. If budget allows it might be possible to pave the alley way from the post office to local bank. Early August is the timeline for these projects.
- Board thoughts about changing the parking on Broadway from 2nd Street to Main with diagonal striping instead of parallel parking.
- Recent discussion with La Jara residents regarding mosquito spraying. Maintenance Worker Rodney Saenz had an issue with an irate resident that verbally accosted him. He is preparing a statement.
- Request for Board approval to continue with demolition of old buildings in the maintenance yard.
- Request for Board approval to solicit bids on the old pickup (gold Chevy)
- Visit from Senator Bennet, August 8th, to discuss sewer lagoon sludge removal project.
- Sludge removal project is scheduled to begin in September, completed by early October.
- I am extending an invitation to Alamosa's City Administrator and Chief of Police to discuss with the Board the Iron Horse housing project concerns.
- 4-day Work Week Proposal

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to solicit bids for gold Chevy maintenance truck; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Town Attorney Reports

Attorney Walker mentioned employee safety to include board members, office staff and maintenance staff stating that if there is ever a concern or a threat to reach out to his office and they will work together to seek restraining orders or pursuing harassment or criminal charges if necessary. Attorney Walker stated that everyone has the right to work in a safe environment.

In his report he mentioned the CML Conference that had a lot of great sessions, He stated that La Jara has representation and appreciates the commitment to investment in the town. One topic that was discussed at the conference was the need for police officers as a state/nation wide issue. Hiring the right candidate is important. Other sessions he attended discussed housing issues and building codes. He discussed Proposition 123 relating to affordable Housing with deadlines for August and November for some grant funding opportunities.

He mentioned that as part of the audit requirement a letter was submitted stating there is no pending litigation. He will work on amending the Town Manager's employment agreement with the changes that were discussed earlier. He received a call from David Baumgarten who is an attorney for COG that is drafting the 1041 Ordinance template. Baumgarten sent the template with changes to the IGA to ensure

towns and counties aren't competing. The 1041 Powers is a collaborated agreement to provide one voice from the San Luis Valley concerning the export of water from the valley. He is working on providing a purchasing policy as well as a contract for providing mosquito spraying to residents outside the town limits. Attorney Walker stated that Attorney Farrish has been out of the office this month and he will be out the following month.

Approval of Town Manager and Attorneys Reports

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to approve the Town Manager and Attorneys reports; Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Valdez.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Police Report

Chief Lujan submitted a written report and offered to answer any questions.

Public Works Report

Public Works Supervisor Thomas Dufresne reported that they have been replacing the remainder of the old water meters that were too deep and required using the backhoe to dig up. He reported that they have been cleaning and preparing for Glory Days. He offered to answer questions.

Clerk Report

Town Clerk Pagnotta presented a proposal for providing online bill payment options for citizens to pay either water/sewer bills or court payments by logging onto a website. She explained that Caselle is the utility billing program that the town is currently using and explained the upgrades that are needed to be able to integrate the system to accommodate online bill payments. She provided the proposal for the increased fees to make the upgrades with the total upfront investment to Caselle being \$2050. She had a question about the monthly Software Assurance fee and wanted to get clarification from Caselle before moving forward. She also presented a proposal for Payment Service Network, Inc. with the fees required to integrate with Caselle. PSN waived the service implementation fees and the annual fees. The monthly maintenance fee is \$200. She also mentioned that PSN offers a paperless billing option that charges \$.25 per person that is enrolled. She explained the timeline for implementation would be a couple of months. She submitted a written report and offered to answer questions.

Building Inspector Report

Building Inspector Rodriguez submitted a written report and stated there isn't much going on. He is waiting on a few of the projects that have been talked about.

Trustee Comments

Mayor Medina stated that she received two identical letters that were addressed to the mayor and board members with no name or signature. She stated that the concerns in the letter can't be addressed if there is no signature. She encouraged citizens that have complaints to bring their concerns to the meetings or come in and speak with the town manager. She also mentioned the CML Conference. She asked that trustees come and ride the float for the Glory Days parade and to help with the event.

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez mentioned that the fire department will be serving breakfast beginning at 7am until 9am for Glory Days.

Trustee Villagomez commented that neighbors are watching out for each other, and it is much appreciated.

Trustee Rendon reiterated that the CML conference was a great experience. She stated that the most enjoyable thing was getting to interact with staff and trustees in a more relaxed sitting.

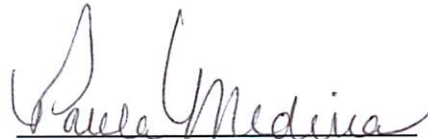
Adjournment:

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by


Town Clerk – Shawn Pagnotta




Mayor / Mayor Pro Tem